

AGENDA REPORT

Date: May 10, 2007

To: USTF, CMEQ, and C/CAG Board of Directors

From: Richard Napier, Executive Director

Subject: Informational Report on Local Climate Change Actions and Organizations

RECOMMENDATION

No action required. Information is provided for perspective and reference.

FISCAL IMPACT

There will be no fiscal impact.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Not applicable

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

Many nonprofit organizations and agencies are starting programs aimed at addressing climate change issues and are requesting time and participation from staff and elected officials. This informational report covers local actions with a chronological perspective. The main focus is on sustainability and climate change organizations or groups which are located on the peninsula and which have staff or volunteers who are active in San Mateo County.

Local Actions in Chronological Order

1997: Sustainable San Mateo County (SSMC) began publishing the Indicators Report and included the precursors to carbon emissions – Air Quality and Transportation – as two of the indicators. In 2005, Carbon Emissions was added as an indicator. In addition, they have offered forums on cutting edge issues and acknowledged local leaders, companies and cities with their awards program. SSMC's efforts focus is on sustainability – the full picture of environment, equity and economy - rather than any specific topic. (www.sustainablesanmateo.org)

2001: Silicon Valley Leadership Group, (SVLG, formerly Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group) responded to the energy crisis and organized member companies to reduce energy use through energy efficiency and demand response measures. Silicon Valley Leadership Group helps local companies work cooperatively with local, regional, state and federal government officials to address major public policy issues affecting the economic health and quality of life in Silicon Valley. They educate and encourage businesses to reduce greenhouse gases and to sign on with Sustainable Silicon Valley and the Energy Watch Partnership and include energy security and climate change in all their policy work. They participated in the development of and were the

first business organization to support AB 32. They facilitate several collaborative projects related to climate change including: (a) building a market for plug-in hybrids, (b) the leading-edge data center project, which demonstrates, measures and advances leading edge technologies, (c) transportation advocacy, (d) the recent Solar TECH partnership to address policy areas regarding solar including everything from financing, permitting and installation to workforce development, performance standards and utility interconnection and (e) the Cool Commutes Challenge, a competition to inspire businesses to improve their commute alternative programs.

(www.svmpg.org)

2001: Sustainable Silicon Valley (SSV) was formed as a collaborative effort between businesses, government officials and NGOs to produce significant environmental improvement and resource conservation in Silicon Valley through the development and implementation of a regional environmental management system. Their first initiative is to reduce CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2010, based on 1990 levels, and they address this objective through encouraging businesses and cities to join SSV and make their own pledges to reduce their carbon emissions. To support their partners in reducing CO₂ emissions, SSV provides educational forums, publishes an annual progress report, garners publicity for members' achievements and facilitates exchanges of best practices. With SVLG and PG&E, SSV provides access to funding from the Energy Watch Partnership for its partners with energy efficiency projects. The work of SSV is larger than climate change – the key factor being the implementation of an Environmental Management System approach and other initiatives will be forthcoming.

(www.sustainablesiliconvalley.org)

2006: The Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club (covering San Mateo, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties) participates in the national Sierra Club Cool Cities Campaign and advocates for cities to sign and implement the U.S Mayors Climate Protection Agreement (MCPA) to reduce CO₂ emissions within the boundaries of the city. The campaign forms Cool Cities Teams of residents in each city to advocate for action and to facilitate exchange of information on processes and practices between cities. Ten cities in San Mateo County have Cool Cities Teams; six cities have signed the MCPA. Additionally, the Cool Cities Campaign is part of the Chapter's wider Global Warming Campaign that works to address global warming through advocacy, education, and support. Recent projects include a study on solar permit fees and subsequent advocacy to reduce these fees and a study on which cities were taking action on global warming and what they were doing. The Chapter has an especially strong educational component resulting from the deep scientific expertise of its staff. (lomaprietaglobalwarming.sierraclub.org)

2006: Cool It is a web-based carbon calculator (www.cool-it.us) and an opportunity to buy renewable energy credits (RECs) to offset home, business, or travel energy use. This is a partnership of the Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, Acterra and Three Phases Energy. The RECs support the development of wind power.

2006: Acterra offers several programs to help individuals reduce their carbon footprints. Green@Home is a residential energy conservation program, now being piloted, that provides home energy audits. The Peninsula Cool Campaign, is an affinity group of parents at Peninsula School who commit to reducing their emissions by meeting monthly challenges. Acterra plans to expand this program to other schools and churches in the fall of 2007. The Sustainable Living Program organizes Green Teams and other events with neighborhood, church or workplace groups to help people reduce energy use (and waste, toxics, etc).

2007: Joint Venture – Silicon Valley Network surveyed cities about their level of concern and action. They have convened a public – private partnership to help local government agencies

identify greenhouse gas reducing technologies and provide leadership in their communities. They formed a task force of cities and counties in Silicon Valley, which will share information on their actions, practices, and research to make it easier for everyone to progress. Joint Venture also plans to provide an opportunity to form a buying pool to negotiate better prices and financing and create a stable market to encourage the growth of clean technology in Silicon Valley.

Other organizations

The Bay Area Alliance created a chart of all the regional organizations, which is attached.

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability assists city and county governments around the world to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by providing its members with technical assistance, software tools, peer collaboration opportunities, and methodology to help local governments measure emissions, set targets and take action. ICLEI places tremendous value in establishing partnerships and is collaborating locally with Sustainable Silicon Valley and regional organizations to provide an integrated approach to local government climate action.

The Bay Area Global Warming Group is an inclusive networking group that is bringing organizations with climate change programs together to create a shared vision for a Carbon Neutral Bay Area. In addition to being collaborative in action, the opportunity for organizations to network provides context for each organization's goals and strategies.

The California Climate Action Registry is a voluntary greenhouse gas registry formed from a nonprofit/public/private partnership, which offers cities and businesses a chance to audit and register their emissions.

Many other organizations address specific issues related to or supporting climate change action, such as Ecology Action (provides the Right Lights program for small businesses in San Mateo County), Flex your Power (energy efficiency), Build it Green and the County RecycleWorks program (provide resources and education on green building), land use organizations (offer input on planning projects), etc.

Agencies such as ABAG, the ABAG/MTC/BAAQMD Joint Policy Committee, the Peninsula League of Cities, League of Women Voters and the South Bayside Waste Management Authority are considering how to be involved in climate change work and how to best provide support to the cities and the community.

Many organizations provide workshops and events that are useful to cities and businesses in San Mateo County. These events are announced in the Sustainable Silicon Valley email to the SSV distribution list. You can join this list at: www.sustainablesiliconvalley.org/participate.htm.

Summary

With the escalation of interest in global warming, the number of organizations working on these issues will continue to increase and new programs and new ideas will emerge. CCAG can offer periodic updates on the changes and developments in this area.

Attachment

Bay Area Alliance Climate Change Matrix